

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended herein, is respectfully requested. Claims 1 through 14 are amended. Claims 15-24 are withdrawn from consideration.

In response to the Examiner's objections to the oath/declaration, a newly executed declaration and a power of attorney is enclosed with this patent application.

The applicant hereby provides the following explanation to clarify the true nature of the claimed invention, as presented in the amended claims. In the optical ferrule according to claim 1 of the above-referenced application, a concave portion in which a gate for resin molding is disposed is formed in a ferrule body, and a depth of this concave portion is deeper than a height of a flash which is formed in the concave portion as a result of the resin molding. Therefore, the problem that insertion of the ferrule body into a housing of an optical connector cannot be performed because of a flash which protrudes from the ferrule body never arises.

In contrast, in the references cited by the Examiner, U.S. Patent No. 5,923,803 ("Bunin et al.") and U.S. Patent No. 5,975,770 ("Yanagi et al."), the "gates" to which Examiner refers are not a gate for resin molding but members which correspond to an adhesive pouring window of the ferrule body of the above-referenced application. Furthermore, as noted by the Examiner, the gate is not disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 5,381,500 ("Edwards et al."). While a gate is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 4,911,518 ("Miller"), it is positioned not in the concaved portion but on the outer surface of the ferrule body, so as to be exposed on the outer periphery thereof.

Furthermore, the relation between the depth of the concaved portion and the height of the flash is not disclosed in either Bunin et al., Yanagi et al, Edawards, et al. or Miller.

The references cited by the Examiner do not teach the significant features of the present invention which have direct bearing on the advantages of the above-referenced invention, as recited in the amended claims. Therefore, the above-referenced application is not obvious from the citations, and the above-referenced application is patentably distinguished from the citations.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version, captioned "Version With Markings To Show Changes Made", showing changes made to the claims and specification by the current amendment. Applicant respectfully requests entry of this Amendment and an early favorable action on the merits.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail under 37 C.F.R. 1.8 in an envelope addressed to:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents, United States Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, D.C. 20231.

DATE: April 8, 2003

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Respectfully submitted,

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Version With Markings To Show Changes Made

--1. (Amended) An optical ferrule comprising a ferrule body; wherein a concave portion [(17c)] in which a gate for [(G) in] resin molding is disposed is formed in said ferrule [a] body [(11)], and a depth of said concave portion is deeper than a height of a flash which is formed in said concave portion as a result of said resin molding.

2. (Amended) The optical ferrule according to claim 1, wherein [in said ferrule body (11), there are formed] an optical fiber insertion opening portion [(2)] for inserting an optical fiber [therein], an optical fiber insertion hole for [(3) opened in a connector connecting end face (6), the optical fiber insertion hole (3)] inserting an end of said optical fiber which is inserted in said optical fiber insertion opening portion [therein and positioning said optical fiber], and a guide pin hole [(4)] for inserting a guide pin for guiding [(22) therein, the guide pin (22) positioning] said ferrule body to a proper position, are formed in said ferrule body so as to position said optical fiber insertion hole in a tip end portion thereof [bodies (11)].

3. (Amended) The optical ferrule according to claim 2, wherein a flange portion [(17)] protruding from an external periphery surface of said ferrule body to an [the] outside is provided in a rear end portion of said ferrule body opposite to said tip end portion [connector connecting end face], and said concave portion is formed in an external surface of said flange portion.

4. (Amended) The optical ferrule according to claim 3, wherein said flange portion has a rectangular shape when viewed from said rear end portion [toward said connector connecting end face], and said concave portion is formed in at least one [each] of right and left side surfaces [(17a)] of the external periphery surface of said flange portion [or in any one of the right and left side surfaces thereof].

5. (Amended) The optical ferrule according to claim 4, wherein said concave portion is formed so as to extend from said side surface to a rear end corner of said rear end portion.

7. (Amended) The optical ferrule according to claim 4, wherein said concave portion is formed between both corner portions [(17m, 17n)] of said side surface which extend along an insertion direction of said optical fiber.

8. (Amended) The optical ferrule according to claim 4, wherein said concave portion is formed in a groove shape extending over a [the] whole length of said flange portion along an insertion direction of said optical fiber [in a connector connecting direction]

9. (Amended) The optical ferrule according to claim 3, wherein said flange portion has a rectangular shape when viewed from said rear end portion [toward said connector connecting end face], and said concave portion is formed in at least one [each] of upper and lower side surfaces [(17a)] of the external periphery surface of said flange portion [or in any one of the upper and lower side surfaces thereof].

10. (Amended) The optical ferrule according to claim 9, wherein said concave portion is formed in a groove shape extending over a [the] whole length of said flange portion along an insertion direction of said optical fiber [a connector connecting direction].

11. (Amended) An optical ferrule comprising a ferrule body, wherein a concave portion for confirming confirmation factors such as [(17c) related] a material of said [a] ferrule body or [(11) and confirmation factors such as] sorts of an optical fiber held [built] in said ferrule body is formed.

12. (Amended) The optical ferrule according to claim 11, wherein said concave portion is formed in a flange portion [(17)] of said ferrule body, and a gate for [(G) in] resin molding is disposed in said concave portion.

13. (Amended) The optical ferrule according to claim 11, wherein said concave portion is formed at a portion other than a [the] flange portion of said ferrule body.

14. (Amended) An optical connector using the optical ferrule according to claim 1 [any one of claims 1 to 13].--